

# Health Consultation

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CEDAR SERVICES SITE

MINNEAPOLIS, HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA

EPA FACILITY ID: MND982074544

DECEMBER 8, 2005

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

Division of Health Assessment and Consultation

Atlanta, Georgia 30333

## **Health Consultation: A Note of Explanation**

An ATSDR health consultation is a verbal or written response from ATSDR to a specific request for information about health risks related to a specific site, a chemical release, or the presence of hazardous material. In order to prevent or mitigate exposures, a consultation may lead to specific actions, such as restricting use of or replacing water supplies; intensifying environmental sampling; restricting site access; or removing the contaminated material.

In addition, consultations may recommend additional public health actions, such as conducting health surveillance activities to evaluate exposure or trends in adverse health outcomes; conducting biological indicators of exposure studies to assess exposure; and providing health education for health care providers and community members. This concludes the health consultation process for this site, unless additional information is obtained by ATSDR which, in the Agency's opinion, indicates a need to revise or append the conclusions previously issued.

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HEALTH CONSULTATION

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Prepared by:

Minnesota Department of Health  
Under Cooperative Agreement with the  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

## FOREWORD

This document summarizes public health concerns related to a hazardous waste site in Minnesota. It is based on a formal site evaluation prepared by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). For a formal site evaluation, a number of steps are necessary:

- *Evaluating exposure:* MDH scientists begin by reviewing available information about environmental conditions at the site. The first task is to find out the quantity of air pollutants emitted from a facility, where they go from the site, and how people might be exposed to them. Usually, MDH does not collect its own environmental sampling data. Rather, MDH relies on information provided by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), private businesses, and the general public.
- *Evaluating health effects:* If there is evidence that people are being exposed—or could be exposed—to hazardous substances, MDH scientists will take steps to determine whether that exposure could be harmful to human health. MDH's report focuses on public health—that is, the health impact on the community as a whole. The report is based on existing scientific information.
- *Developing recommendations:* In the evaluation report, MDH outlines its conclusions regarding any potential health threat posed by a site and offers recommendations for reducing or eliminating human exposure to pollutants. The role of MDH is primarily advisory. For that reason, the evaluation report will typically recommend actions to be taken by other agencies—including EPA and MPCA. If, however, an immediate health threat exists, MDH will issue a public health advisory to warn people of the danger and will work to resolve the problem.
- *Soliciting community input:* The evaluation process is interactive. MDH starts by soliciting and evaluating information from various government agencies, the individuals or organizations responsible for the site, and community members living near the site. Any conclusions about the site are shared with the individuals, groups, and organizations that provided the information. Once an evaluation report has been prepared, MDH seeks feedback from the public. *If you have questions or comments about this report, we encourage you to contact us.*

*Please write to:* Community Relations Coordinator  
Site Assessment and Consultation Unit  
Minnesota Department of Health  
625 North Robert Street / P.O. Box 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975

*OR call us at:* (651) 201-4897 or 1-800-657-3908  
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## **Summary**

The Cedar Service site is contaminated with wood treatment products from a former wood treatment operation, primarily pentachlorophenol (PCP), polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and dioxins. Residual contaminated soil remains at the site at depth, and may be present in shallow soils or at the surface, although exposure is likely minimal. Groundwater is heavily contaminated with PCP on and off the site. Some groundwater is used for industrial or commercial purposes, and users of the groundwater may be exposed to PCP. The public health hazard from exposure to contaminated soil and groundwater is indeterminate.

### **I. Site Background and History**

The Cedar Service site is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of St. Anthony Boulevard and University Avenue in Northeast Minneapolis. The site occupies approximately 22 acres of relatively flat land within the much larger Shoreham Yard railroad facility that is currently owned and operated by the Soo Line Railroad Company (Soo Line), a business unit of the larger Canadian Pacific Railway (CP Rail). The eastern part of the site is currently used for storage of intermodal shipping containers, and has been covered with gravel. The remainder of the site is vacant land. The area around the site is primarily used for commercial/industrial purposes, although a golf course and park are located northeast of the site. The nearest residences are located approximately 1/3 mile to the west, across University Avenue. The Mississippi River is located approximately 2/3 mile to the west. The location of the site is shown in Figure 1.

Cedar Service, Inc. (previously known as Scott Pole and Treating Co.) operated at the site from 1926 to 1972 (Barr 1996). The company was involved in wood treating operations at the site using creosote (until the mid-1960s); later pentachlorophenol (PCP) mixed with fuel oil was used. The company used a variety of steel-lined concrete tanks and vats for their operations in a main process area on the western part of the site, and also stored untreated poles at the site. Treated wood was typically shipped out to customers by rail, and not stored on site. The layout of the site while it was in operation is shown in Figure 2.

Around 1961, it was reported that approximately 30,000 gallons of PCP wood treatment fluid were spilled when a truck accident caused a pipe rupture at the PCP pump house located at the southern end of the wood treatment area (Barr 1996). The spilled PCP reportedly flowed south toward a low area. Details regarding the spill and the response to it are not available.

Cedar Service, Inc. ceased operation at the site in 1972, and the structures associated with the operation were demolished in 1973. Cedar Service, Inc. reportedly buried between 8,000 and 10,000 gallons of wood treatment sludge on the property (Starns 2005). The former main process area remains vacant.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) conducted an initial site investigation in 1989 that consisted of five soil borings in the main process area (Barr 1996). PCP was detected in soil

samples from each of the soil borings, and petroleum-related contaminants were also found in some of the soil samples. Subsequent investigations have shown that PCP is present in shallow and deep groundwater at high concentrations at the site, and the area of PCP contamination in groundwater extends some distance off the site to the south. A number of wells that serve mainly industrial processes at businesses located south of the site have been impacted by PCP contamination.

In February 2004, Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) staff requested that MDH staff assist MDA staff in evaluating the potential public health concerns associated with the site. In the preparation of this report, MDH consulted with local residents, a community group (the Shoreham Area Advisory Committee, or SAAC), as well as staff from the MDA, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the City of Minneapolis, and Soo Line.

#### Geology/Hydrogeology

Surficial soils at the site are mixed sand and fill material, generally four to six feet thick (Golder Associates 2005a). The sand and fill materials are underlain by 60 to 200 feet of complex unconsolidated sediments and alluvial deposits, primarily poorly graded sand with variable amounts of silt, gravel, clay and mixtures of the three (Barr 1996, Golder Associates 2005b). Clay till layers have been encountered on the western boundary of the site at depths of 30 to 45 feet below ground. The uppermost bedrock formations beneath the site are the St. Peter Sandstone and Prairie du Chien Dolomite (limestone). A bedrock valley trending northeast to southwest exists in the area of the site. In this valley, the St. Peter Sandstone has been eroded away so that the Prairie du Chien Dolomite is the uppermost bedrock.

The uppermost groundwater at the site is present at depths between 36 and 42 feet (Barr 1996). Groundwater flow in the unconsolidated soils above the bedrock has been described as occurring in flow zones based on their different hydraulic properties (AMEC 2005a; IT 2001). However, it is more generally more accepted practice to consider groundwater flow in terms of the unconsolidated sediments and bedrock units.

Groundwater flow has been characterized by measuring ground water levels in the numerous monitoring wells installed at and near the site. Based on measurements collected in 2004 (AMEC 2005a), groundwater flow in the unconsolidated sediments beneath the site appears to be to the south, and divides to flow around a groundwater 'mound' at the southwest corner of the site. Groundwater flow in the bedrock units (the St. Peter and the upper Prairie du Chien) is generally to the south.

Groundwater level measurements collected in nested wells (several wells in the same location completed at different depths) also indicate a strong downward vertical gradient at the site, so that groundwater also flows from shallow unconsolidated sediments toward the deeper bedrock units.

#### Soil Investigations and Response Actions at the Site

The first large-scale investigation at the site was conducted in 1995 by Barr Engineering

Company on behalf of Soo Line (Barr 1996). It involved test trenches to investigate shallow soil contamination, and soil borings to investigate deeper soil contamination. Thirty-five soil samples were analyzed at the Barr office using an immunoassay method for PCP, selected petroleum-related volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and total polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). These compounds were selected to be representative of past chemical use at the site. Creosote was the original wood treatment chemical used; PAHs were a main constituent of creosote. Later, PCP dissolved in light fuel oil was used, and therefore analysis for PCP and petroleum related VOCs is representative.

While the immunoassay analytical method is now accepted by EPA, it may not have been considered valid by EPA at that time. Immunoassay methods, which rely on an antigen-antibody response to PCP and a number of other chlorophenols, may be not be as accurate for PCP due to cross reactivity with the other chemicals. The same is true for immunoassays for other chemicals such as PAHs. Six of the 35 soil samples were also analyzed at a separate fixed laboratory using standard laboratory analysis methods. The soil boring/test trench locations are shown in Figure 3, and the data are presented in Table 1. A comparison of the two sets of data was performed to develop a rough correlation factor between the data from the two analytical methods. The correlation factor was then used to estimate an “equivalent laboratory concentration” for the samples that were analyzed by immunoassay only. That value is also shown in Table 1. It appears that the correlation was uneven at best.

Soil contamination was found in two distinct areas: the former process area, and a small fill area (the north disposal area) located just north of the former process area. Shallow soils (less than 10 feet deep) were found to be contaminated with PCP at concentrations as high as 1,300 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg) based on immunoassay analysis, and total PAH concentrations were as high as 1,000 mg/kg. Soil samples from the deeper soil borings (10 to 34 feet below ground) showed lower concentrations of PCP and total PAHs, with maximum values of 22 mg/kg and 75 mg/kg respectively based on immunoassay analysis. Soil samples collected from below the water table (at depths greater than 34 feet) also showed contamination, with PCP levels as high as 250 mg/kg and total PAH concentrations as high as 630 mg/kg based on immunoassay analysis. Concentrations of petroleum-related VOCs were lower based on immunoassay analysis.

The above values generally exceed soil evaluation criteria developed by the MPCA known as Soil Reference Values (SRV) and Soil Leaching Values (SLVs). The SRVs represent the concentration of a contaminant in soil at or below which normal dermal contact, inhalation, and/or ingestion are unlikely to result in an adverse human health effect, while the SLVs represent the concentration of a contaminant in soil above which leaching could contaminate the groundwater to levels above established standards. The current SRV for PCP is 6 mg/kg based on a residential land use, and 120 mg/kg based on a commercial/industrial land use (MPCA 2005). The current SRV for total PAHs (expressed as benzo(a)pyrene equivalents; see below) is 2 mg/kg based on a residential land use, and 3 mg/kg based on an industrial land use. The SRV for benzene, the most toxic petroleum-related VOC measured, is 6 mg/kg based on a residential land use, and 10 mg/kg based on a commercial/industrial land use. The current generic SLVs for

PCP, benzene and total PAHs are 0.034 mg/kg (both benzene and PCP) and 10.2 mg/kg, respectively. The results of the Barr investigation showed that a significant area of soil contamination, extending to below the water table was present at the site in at least two locations, and that groundwater at the site had been severely impacted by site contaminants (see below).

In 1997, Soo Line proposed a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address the soil contamination at the site (Barr 1997). Prior to implementing the CAP, surface soil samples were collected from two locations at the site and five soil borings were advanced to collect sub-surface soil samples to further characterize soil contamination. Samples collected from the soil borings were screened (visually and using field instruments) for the presence of PCP and oil contamination, and the two surface soil samples and two sub-surface soil samples thought to be most contaminated were analyzed in a laboratory for dioxins and furans, which are known contaminants of PCP (see below). One subsurface sample was collected from soil boring SB-1 at a depth of 10.6 to 12 feet. This sample was designated sample SB-1-6, and had a strong odor and heavy oil sheen. The other subsurface sample (designated SB-5-C) was a composite of multiple samples from soil borings SB-3, SB-4, and SB-5 that appeared the most heavily contaminated, and had a weak odor, and only a trace of oil sheen. The surface soil sample and soil borings locations are shown in Figure 4.

Dioxins and furans were detected by fixed laboratory analysis in all four soil samples. The results of the dioxin/furan analyses are presented in Table 2. Surface soil sample SS-1 (collected in the former process area) had the highest TCDD-TEQ estimate, 18.29 ug/kg. The other surface soil sample (SS-2) was collected in the former pole storage area. No laboratory analyses were conducted for PCP to determine if there was a correlation between the levels of dioxins found and the PCP level in the soil. Results are reported for individual dioxin and furan congeners, as well as in 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin (TCDD) toxicity equivalents as determined using the most recent World Health Organization dioxin toxicity equivalency (TEQ) factors from 1998. This scheme normalizes the toxicity of individual dioxin and furan congeners to TCDD, which is considered the most toxic dioxin/furan, to produce a total estimate of the risk of the dioxin/furan mixture.

The concentration of dioxins and furans, as expressed in TCDD-TEQ, exceeded the current MPCA SRVs for dioxin of 0.020 micrograms per kilogram of soil (ug/kg) for residential land use, and 0.035 ug/kg for industrial land uses (MPCA 2005). ATSDR has also developed a "Decision Framework For Dioxin Contaminated Sites" to assist health professionals in evaluating various actions based on TCDD-TEQ concentrations in environmental media (ATSDR 1997). The ATSDR framework uses a variety of evaluation criteria for dioxins in soil, ranging from a screening concentration of 0.050 ug/kg to an "action level" of 1 ug/kg in soil. MDH has recommended use of the 0.050 ug/kg screening concentration as a recommended cleanup level at other dioxin-contaminated wood treatment sites (MDH 2002; MDH 2003). EPA also has an initial action level for dioxins in soil of 1 ug/kg for residential sites, and 5 to 20 ug/kg for commercial/industrial sites (EPA 1998).

Because of the high levels of PCP present in soils on the site the selected remedy for the CAP



was excavation of the shallow (less than 12 feet in depth) contaminated soil for off-site disposal as a hazardous waste. The selected cleanup goal was 150 mg/kg of PCP, based on the potential for direct human contact (note that SRVs were not available at that time). Areas identified as exceeding this value are shown in Figure 4. This value was developed by MPCA staff at the request of MDA staff, and is close to the current MPCA SRV of 120 mg/kg for industrial land use. It was recognized that this cleanup goal was not protective of groundwater, as significant amounts of contaminated soil would remain at the site at depths below 12 feet.

In 1997, approximately 12,200 tons of contaminated soil were excavated and removed from the site for transport (by rail) to an out-of-state land disposal facility. The excavations, which ranged in depth from one to 12 feet, were generally expanded outside the originally identified areas shown in Figure 4 based on the results of confirmatory testing. The confirmatory testing did show some areas of PCP contaminated soil (up to 400 mg/kg) remained at depths of 12 feet but the majority of the contaminated soil identified in previous investigations (and described by the data in Tables 1 and 2) was removed from the site (IT 2001). The outlines of the final excavated areas are shown in red in Figure 5. The excavations were backfilled with 2,800 tons of amended soil (containing low concentrations of PCP mixed with soil amendments and microbial nutrients to speed degradation) that was then covered with 9,400 tons of clean fill (Golder Associates 2005a). It was thought that the removal of the PCP contaminated soil and the use of soil amendments would also act to reduce PCP concentrations in groundwater over time.

A recent review of historic air photographs and anecdotal information suggests that several other areas of the site may have been used for waste disposal (Golder Associates 2005a). These areas are the subject of further soil investigation to occur in 2005. This investigation will include the collection of soil samples from a minimum of 11 soil borings in the former process area, the north disposal area, and other areas of the site to determine the nature and extent of residual PCP contamination in these areas. All soil samples will be analyzed in the field for PCP via an EPA-approved immunoassay analysis (EPA SW-846 Method #4010); all positive samples for PCP plus the shallowest sample from each boring location will also be analyzed in a laboratory for PCP and other semi-volatile compounds. Selected samples (typically those surface soil samples showing the highest PCP concentrations) will also be analyzed in a laboratory for dioxins and furans. The proposed investigation areas are also shown in Figure 5. Note that the 2005 soil investigation is focused on characterizing any remaining potential contaminated areas based on historical evidence, and is not an attempt to characterize the entire site. The eastern side of the site has been covered with gravel and is heavily used for intermodal container operations, which makes access difficult and thereby limits potential for exposure (see Figure 1).

#### Groundwater Investigation on and off the Site

Since site investigation activities began, numerous monitoring wells have been installed on and off the site to evaluate groundwater conditions. Five monitoring wells were originally installed by Barr in 1995 to evaluate groundwater quality (Barr 1996). PCP was detected at a concentration of 8,400 micrograms per liter ( $\mu\text{g/L}$ ) in MW-101, which was installed in the former process area. PCP was found at very low levels in two other monitoring wells. Total PAHs were reported at a concentration of 6,200  $\mu\text{g/L}$  in MW-101, and were below detection

limits in the other four wells. Low levels of several petroleum-related VOCs were also found in MW-101, but not in any of the other monitoring wells. The locations of all monitoring wells at and near the site can be found in Figure 6.

The MDH Health Risk Limit (HRL) for PCP in water is 3 µg/L based on theoretical cancer risk; no HRL exists for total PAHs. The HRLs represent levels of contamination in drinking water supplies that MDH considers acceptable for daily human consumption over a lifetime, and are promulgated rules. The MDH Health-Based Value (HBV, essentially a site-specific guideline that has not been promulgated as rule) for total PAHs is 0.05 µg/L based on the cancer potency of benzo(a)pyrene as described on the EPA Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) website (accessible at <http://www.epa.gov/iris/>). The HBV assumes that the PAHs are all benzo(a)pyrene. HRLs or HBVs for carcinogens are based on a calculated cancer risk of no more than one case per 100,000 exposed people for a lifetime.

In 1997, a water sample collected from monitoring well MW-126, located just south of the former process area, was analyzed for dioxins and furans. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3. The concentration of dioxins and furans, expressed as TCDD-TEQ, was 6.83 picograms per liter (pg/L). The PCP concentration in the sample was 3,900 µg/L. Details such as whether the sample was filtered are not known. This could have affected the dioxin/furan concentration as these compounds would be expected to bind to micro particulates in the water. There is no state HRL for dioxins and furans. The EPA has established a Maximum Contaminant Limit (MCL) for public water supplies for 2,3,7,8-TCDD of 30 pg/L. The EPA Office of Water has recommended health advisory values for 2,3,7,8-TCDD of 40 pg/L based on non-cancer effects and 2 pg/L based on cancer effects (EPA 2004a). EPA also recommended a health advisory value of 1,000 pg/L that is designed to be protective based on a one-day exposure.

As of 2004, the monitoring well network used by AMEC Earth & Environmental, consultants to Soo Line, to evaluate groundwater consisted of 36 monitoring wells on-site, and five monitoring wells at the adjacent McFarland-Dworsky barrel site (AMEC 2005a). The wells are completed at various depths in the unconsolidated overburden and various bedrock units.

The most recent groundwater monitoring event occurred in October 2004, when samples were collected from 20 of the 41 monitoring wells (AMEC 2005a). The groundwater samples were analyzed for the presence of PCP, ten PCP-related breakdown products, and a number of inorganic parameters. The groundwater data are presented in Table 4.

PCP was detected in most of the wells; the highest concentration, 10,000 µg/L, was seen in MW-126. PCP breakdown products were also detected in some wells, at much lower concentrations. None of the PCP breakdown products were detected at concentrations in excess of their respective HRLs, although HRLs exist for only two of the ten compounds (2,4,6-trichlorophenol and 2,4-dichlorophenol). The areas that have historically shown the highest concentrations of PCP in groundwater are in the area of monitoring wells MW-101 and MW-121 in the former

process area, and the MW99-129/139/149 well nest located south and west of the former process area.

The PCP results have been roughly stratified and plotted by the depth of well completion, and are presented in the Appendix as Figures 8-11. In the shallow unconsolidated sediment wells, the highest level of PCP observed (2,300 µg/L) was in MW-99-129, south of the former process area. The map shows concentrations of PCP in excess of 10 µg/L extending south of the CPR-Shoreham property, although the full extent of the contamination is inferred. In the deeper unconsolidated sediment wells, PCP concentrations were as high as 10,000 µg/L in MW-126. The area of PCP contamination in the deeper unconsolidated sediment wells appears to be smaller than in the shallow wells and is centered on the former process area, but again the limits of the plume are inferred.

High levels of PCP contamination also occur in the St. Peter aquifer, and the contamination is extensive. The highest level of PCP in the St. Peter (7,700 µg/L) was observed in MW03-59-MS, south of the former process area. High concentrations of PCP (in excess of 1,000 µg/L) have been found in monitoring wells located over 1,000 feet south of the Soo Line Shoreham Yard property, at depths of approximately 160 feet below grade. The full extent of the groundwater contamination has not been defined, but extends at least 3,000 feet south of the site.

Lower levels of PCP have been detected in the underlying Prairie du Chien formation. The maximum level of PCP detected in the Prairie du Chien was 860 µg/L in MW03-59-OPD. Data from one additional monitoring well (MW03-55-OPD) not normally considered part of the Cedar Service Site monitoring network is also shown in Figure 11. The monitoring well was sampled for PCP as a part of a broader investigation of groundwater quality in the Prairie du Chien aquifer south of the Soo Line Shoreham Yard Facility (AMEC 2005b). This investigation showed that the Prairie du Chien monitoring wells south of the Cedar Service site shown in Figure 11 also typically contain low levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as trichloroethene (TCE), and petroleum products. Levels of TCE and petroleum products in some monitoring wells exceed their respective HRLs or HBVs. This contamination may originate from former railroad maintenance and chemical-related business operations located on the east side of the Soo Line Shoreham Yard facility.

Historically, the concentrations of PCP in the various wells have not varied significantly, and the groundwater investigations continue to focus on determining the full geographic extent of the groundwater contamination rather than focusing on trends in the contamination over time. PCP concentrations in groundwater both on and off the site have not decreased significantly since the soil removal actions in 1997, and may have increased in some of the wells.

Beginning in 1998, samples have been collected for analysis for PCP from several commercial wells located south of the site by MDA, or by Soo Line at the direction of MDA. The wells, locations, and the PCP result are listed in Table 5, and locations are shown in Figure 7. High levels of PCP (well in excess of the HRL) have consistently been detected in samples from wells located at three businesses south of the site: Jax Café (a restaurant), Hard Chrome (a metal

plating company), and Universal Plating (also a metal plating company). PCP was detected at a low level (only slightly in excess of the HRL) in one sample from a former General Mills building southeast of the site, and a 'suspect' detect was reported at a private well located south of the site. This well has subsequently been abandoned. The highest levels have been detected at Universal Plating, which had a maximum PCP detection of 422 µg/L in April 2004. The Jax Café and Universal Plating wells are completed in the Prairie du Chien aquifer (and possibly the lower portion of the St. Peter), while the former General Mills well is completed in both the Prairie du Chien and underlying Jordan aquifers. The well at the Hard Chrome facility is open to both the St. Peter and Prairie du Chien aquifers.

The well at Jax Café is used seasonally to provide water for an outdoor artificial trout stream (see description below). Since 2003, water samples from Jax Café have typically been collected by MDA staff at the well, at the front end of the stream, and at the base of the stream just prior to discharge. The samples are analyzed for PCP and various breakdown products of PCP. Historical data from these three monitoring points are presented in Table 6. The well at Jax Café is reportedly not used for any other purpose than the trout stream. Trout from the stream are not used for food.

On March 10, 2005, the MDA issued a Request For Response Action (RFRA) for the site to CP Rail. The RFRA establishes the actions MDA believes are needed to investigate and remediate the remaining contaminated soil at the site, and groundwater contamination both on and off-site. It also establishes a schedule for conducting these activities, and describes potential penalties for failure to meet the schedule established in the RFRA. CP Rail has continued to conduct the activities laid out in the RFRA on a voluntary basis.

#### Site Visit

On April 23, 2004 and September 15, 2005, MDH staff accompanied MDA on visits to the Cedar Service Site in Northeast Minneapolis. The purpose of the visits was to become familiar with the site and the area around it, and to assist MDA in the collection of water samples from wells located south of the site for analysis for PCP and related chlorophenols by the MDA lab.

The site visits began at Jax Café, located at 1928 University Ave NE. MDH and MDA staff talked briefly with the staff, and then proceeded to the outdoor garden where an artificial stream containing live trout is located. The trout stream is fed by a dedicated well (Unique Well #200256), which is only turned on for the season (roughly April to October) according to the maintenance supervisor. PCP has been detected in the well for a number of years (see Tables 4 and 5). Samples were collected from the end of the stream (just prior to its discharge to the sanitary sewer), from the base of the waterfall where the water enters the stream, and from the wellhead itself. Prior to reaching the top of the waterfall from the well, the water passes through a 6-foot tall treatment tower made of buckets and 'wiffle-ball' type media. This simple device has been shown to reduce the PCP concentrations by about half, based on the results of sampling, by 'stripping' the PCP out of the water and into the air. The trout, which come from the Star Prairie, Wisconsin trout farm, have been doing well according to the maintenance supervisor.

Prior to leaving the site, it was confirmed with the head chef that the trout from the stream are not being served to the public.

Staff next proceeded to Gluek Riverside Park, located at 2104 Marshall Street NE. MDH and MDA staff were met by a maintenance staff person from the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, who had made the well (Unique Well #439817) ready for sampling by attaching the pump handle. The well was pumped for several minutes to flush it, and a water sample was collected for PCP analysis. The handle was then removed from the well. Gluek Riverside Park is closed pending removal of asbestos contamination that originated from the nearby Western Mineral Products vermiculite plant (EPA 2005). The well had been closed due to the presence of vinyl chloride at concentrations above its HRL from an unknown source (MDH 2005a).

Next, MDH and MDA staff visited the Hard Chrome facility at 2631 2<sup>nd</sup> Street NE. The facility is a large plating shop. The well on the site is used for process rinse water and cooling only, and is not used for potable purposes, according to the manager. Dermal contact with the process water is likely infrequent, as the plating baths are typically caustic and/or contain high concentrations of metals in solution. Employees appeared to avoid contact, and wore protective equipment (i.e., heavy rubber gloves, boots, and aprons). The process water is treated by the facility's wastewater treatment system prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer.

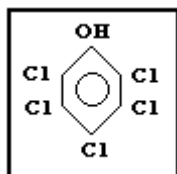
MDH and MDA staff also visited Universal Plating at 1900 Monroe St NE. This operation is smaller than, but similar to Hard Chrome. Water from the well (Unique Well #175857) is used for process water and for cooling during the summer months. There also appears to be little opportunity for dermal contact with the water at this facility, and the well is not used for potable water supply. The well water is ultimately run through the facility's wastewater treatment system prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer.

The Cedar Services site itself consists of a grassy area at the northwest corner of the Soo Line Shoreham Yard facility. The soil at the site is sandy, with tall grass over most of the original site area. Small pieces of wood (possibly old railroad ties) are visible in several areas. There is little else of note at the site except a number of monitoring wells that are visible. While the site is accessible, there is little to attract visitors or trespassers to the site, and no physical hazards (other than frequent truck and rail traffic) were apparent. A large sign at the entrance road to the facility states that it is CP Rail property and that trespassing is not allowed.

## **II. Discussion**

Pentachlorophenol (PCP) is a white, crystalline solid that has been one of the most widely used chemicals for the preservation of wood products such as utility poles, fence posts, railroad ties, and other common industrial wood products. Beginning in 1936, it was widely used as an insecticide, fungicide, herbicide, molluscicide, and algicide in a wide variety of products and applications (ATSDR 1994, EPA 2004b). Because of its widespread use, PCP is common in the environment, and is found across the United States in surface waters, sediments, rainwater,

groundwater, soils, food, and living organisms, including humans. Historically it has been estimated that volatilization from the surface of PCP-treated wood products results in the release of as much as 760,000 pounds of PCP to the air per year in the U.S. (ATSDR 1994). The chemical structure of PCP, which consists of five chlorine atoms and a hydroxyl group attached to a benzene ring, is shown below.



Chemical Structure of PCP

In the environment, PCP may adsorb to soils depending on the pH of the soil and its organic matter content. The amount of PCP adsorbed at a given pH increases with increasing organic content of the soil (ATSDR 1994). PCP is more mobile in soil under neutral or alkaline conditions, and adsorption is minimal at pH values above 6.8. PCP is broken down by microorganisms in the soil, and biodegradation is thought to be the major pathway of PCP degradation in the environment. PCP can also be degraded by sunlight, however (EPA 2004b). In groundwater systems, PCP has been shown to be capable of being degraded by indigenous soil microbes. In a laboratory study using contaminated groundwater from a former wood treatment site, Schmidt et al (1999) demonstrated a reduction of PCP in the groundwater from a maximum of 405 µg/L to <2 µg/L with the addition of oxygen, and regardless of the concentration of typical microbial nutrients.

PCP is considered a semi-volatile compound, and has a low vapor pressure. As such, volatilization from contaminated water and soil would not be expected to be a significant source of exposure under normal conditions (ATSDR 1994). PCP does volatilize from treated wood surfaces, however. PCP may also have the ability to bioaccumulate, or build up, in the tissues of animals (such as fish) exposed to it (EPA 2004b). It has not been shown to become further concentrated in animal tissues as it moves up the food chain, however.

In humans, PCP is readily absorbed through inhalation and ingestion (ATSDR 1994, Proudfoot 2003, Radon et al 2004) but is less easily absorbed through the skin. In aqueous solution, it has been estimated that only 10% - 20% of PCP can be absorbed through the skin (ATSDR 1994). However, in the presence of oils or other solvents, the absorption of PCP through the skin can be greatly increased (Baynes et al 2002). Once absorbed, most PCP binds to plasma proteins and is slowly metabolized by the liver (ATSDR 1994). The primary route of PCP elimination is through the urine.

In humans, short-term exposure to PCP in the workplace is associated with adverse effects to the kidneys, blood, lungs, nervous system, immune system, and gastrointestinal tract (ATSDR 1994). It can also cause a potentially serious increase in body temperature as the body attempts to metabolize it (Proudfoot 2003). Dermal contact can irritate the skin, eyes, and mouth. These types of adverse effects are usually only seen as a result of workplace exposures, which can be

severe. Long-term exposure to low levels of PCP can cause damage to the liver, kidneys, blood, and nervous system. PCP is considered a probable human carcinogen by the U.S. EPA (ATSDR 1994). Some of the adverse effects associated with exposure to PCP may be caused by impurities present in commercially produced PCP. Typically, commercial grade PCP was approximately 86% pure (Proudfoot 2003). Impurities included other polychlorinated phenols, polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins, and polychlorinated dibenzofurans. In PCP treated wood products, one study showed that the concentrations of dioxins were closely related to the concentration of PCP (Fries et al 2002). In 1986, however, EPA executed an agreement with the wood preservative industry severely restricting the amount of impurities allowed in commercial PCP (EPA 2004b).

Polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins and polychlorinated dibenzofurans (collectively referred to as dioxins) are the PCP impurities of most concern. The polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins include 75 individual compounds, and the polychlorinated dibenzofurans include 135 individual compounds. These compounds are technically referred to as congeners. During PCP production, a variety of different congeners were typically formed, with dioxins and furans containing six, seven, and eight chlorine atoms making up by far the highest proportion of the congeners produced and dioxins being present in much greater proportion than furans (EPA 2000; Fries et al 2002). The proportion of dioxin congener groups found in soil samples at the site closely follows the typical congener profile for PCP (EPA 2000). However, it is unknown whether PCP and dioxin occurrence at the site are correlated.

One dioxin congener (2,3,7,8 TCDD) is thought to be the most toxic and has been studied extensively. Not all dioxins and furans are as toxic as TCDD, but all are thought to cause adverse effects through the same mechanisms. Penta- and hexachloro-dioxins with chlorine atoms in the 2, 3, 7 and 8 positions appear to have similar toxicities, while other dioxins that do not have chlorine atoms in those positions are relatively less toxic (ASTDR 1998).

Polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are produced by the incomplete combustion of organic materials such as coal, oil, wood, tobacco, and even food products (ATSDR 1995). They are also found in such products as asphalt, coal tar, creosote, and roofing tar. As a result, they are very common in the environment from such processes as volcanic eruptions, forest fires, home wood burning, and vehicle exhaust. Over 100 PAHs have been identified, and they are usually found in the environment as mixtures. PAHs generally fall into two groups based on their potential health effects: those that are carcinogenic (cancer causing, known as cPAHs), and those that are not (non-carcinogenic PAHs, or nPAHs). The PAHs found on the site are likely present as a result of the use of creosote in wood treatment. Creosote itself is usually derived from coal tar, and is described as a thick, oily liquid that is amber or black in color, and contains hundreds or even thousands of different chemicals including PAHs and phenols (ATSDR 1996).

It has been in use as a wood preservative and waterproofing agent for over 100 years.

PAHs tend to bind to soil particles, especially organic matter, and therefore tend to remain in soils and sediments. Because of their affinity for organic matter, PAHs can accumulate in aquatic and terrestrial organisms, but unlike PCP, can become concentrated as they move up the

foodchain (ATSDR 1995). This effect is somewhat balanced by the ability of many organisms, such as fish, to metabolize PAHs. In soil, PAHs can be broken down by microorganisms. The rate and extent of biodegradation can be influenced by environmental factors, the composition of the soil, the type of microbes present, the presence of other toxic compounds, and the properties and concentrations of the mixture of PAHs present (ATSDR 1995).

Individual cPAHs are classified as probable or possible human carcinogens by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) (ATSDR 1995). Exposure to high levels of PAHs in general has also been associated in animals with reproductive difficulties and adverse effects on the skin and immune system. Adverse effects on the liver and gastro-intestinal tract have also been noted. While PAHs have not been the main focus of investigation at the site, they are likely present in soil in the same places that PCP is detected.

#### Exposure to Contaminated Soil at the Site

The soil excavation conducted by Soo Line in 1997 resulted in the removal of approximately 12,200 tons of PCP contaminated soil, including the most contaminated areas described above and in Tables 1 and 2. The contaminated soils were excavated to a depth of 12 feet, with a cleanup goal of 150 mg/kg of PCP. While this cleanup action removed a large amount of contaminated soil, it remains at the site at depths below 12 feet in the excavation area. It may exist at shallower depths or at the surface elsewhere on the site (in areas of past disposal or where use remain relatively unchanged) where people could come into contact with it. Surface soils on the eastern part of the site (now used for intermodal container operations) have been covered with gravel.

Given the current status of the site as vacant land, separated from populated areas by a main highway and Soo Line property, it is unlikely that people are being exposed to any remaining contaminated soil on a regular basis. However, people may occasionally visit the site and the seriousness of exposures over even short periods is unknown given the lack of data on present levels of contamination in surface soil across the site. The 2005 soil investigation should provide some additional information on the extent of contaminated soil remaining at the site. The contaminated soil at depth at the site is a continuing source of groundwater contamination, and the soil could be brought to the surface if the site is ever redeveloped for another use.

#### Exposure to Contaminated Groundwater

Groundwater contamination from the prior use of the site as a wood treatment operation is extensive, both in terms of the concentration of PCP in the groundwater and in terms of the size of the area and number of aquifers that have been impacted. PCP has been found at concentrations as high as 10,000 µg/L in the former process area on the site. High concentrations of PCP (in excess of 1,000 µg/L) have been found in monitoring wells located over 1,000 feet south of the Soo Line Shoreham Yard property, and the contamination extends at least 3,000 feet south of the site. Lower levels of PCP have been detected in the underlying Prairie du Chien formation, a regional aquifer, with a maximum level of PCP found in the Prairie du Chien of 860 µg/L. These concentrations are far in excess of the MDH HRL of 3 µg/L. Groundwater resources in the area have been significantly degraded by the extensive PCP contamination.



Repeated well searches in the area of the Soo Line Shoreham Yard facility have not identified any private wells that are still in use for drinking water purposes (AMEC 2004). A possible shallow residential well located south of the site was sampled prior to its abandonment in 2000; it showed only a trace of PCP. While the presence of private wells in the area impacted by the PCP contamination in groundwater cannot be conclusively ruled out, it is unlikely. Homes in the area are all connected to the City of Minneapolis public water supply.

Dermal and inhalation exposure to PCP may be occurring at several businesses that have wells contaminated by PCP. PCP is considered to be semi-volatile; data collected from the well and trout stream at Jax Café show that PCP is being removed from the water as it travels from the well to the point it enters the sanitary sewer (see Table 6). Therefore, there may be some exposure to PCP volatilizing from the treatment tower and trout stream. The area is outdoors, so the PCP would be quickly dispersed. Some of the PCP loss from the stream may also occur from absorption by the trout or binding to sediments. In the past, trout from the stream were reportedly served to customers, and some exposure to PCP that was absorbed by the trout would have occurred. In a 1998 memorandum to MDA staff, MDH staff calculated that the health risk from eating the trout was minimal (MDH 1998).

Workers at the two plating shops using PCP contaminated water may be exposed through infrequent accidental skin contact or inhalation. The water used in the various plating baths is often agitated, which would increase the volatilization of PCP. The amount of exposure would depend on many factors. While the water use is mainly indoors, there is a considerable amount of ventilation in the facilities to reduce the humidity and maintain a comfortable and safe working environment. However, there is also nothing to prevent another business from constructing a commercial well in one of the contaminated aquifers and using the water in other ways that would lead to more frequent, or more intense exposure to PCP.

The water pumped by the various businesses with impacted wells is ultimately discharged to the regional sanitary sewer system. PCP discharged to the sanitary sewer system should be broken down during wastewater treatment (ATSDR 1994).

Dioxins have been detected in groundwater in one sample collected just south of the former process area. Migration of dioxin from contaminated soils to groundwater via colloidal transport can occur (EPA 2004b). The presence of other compounds, such as petroleum oils that were typically used as carriers for PCP, may also influence the movement of dioxins through soil. Dioxins have been detected in groundwater at other wood treatment sites, including a PCP-using pole treating operation located in the state of Idaho (EPA 2002). Dioxins have also been detected in groundwater at a former wood treatment site in northern Minnesota, the St. Regis site in Cass Lake (MDH 2005b).

Because of their much different physical properties (mainly their greater affinity for binding to organic matter), dioxins would not be expected to migrate as PCP does in groundwater systems. While their maximum travel distance has not been fully described in the literature, their behavior in groundwater systems would likely be similar to that of PAHs. PAHs were detected in the

most contaminated well in the former process area on the site (MW-101), but were not detected in other nearby monitoring wells. This indicates that their ability to migrate in groundwater is restricted. The low dioxin concentration (6.83 pg/L) but relatively high PCP concentration (3,900 µg/L) detected in the one sample from MW-126 analyzed to date for dioxins also supports the conclusion that PCP migrates much more easily than dioxins in groundwater. Therefore, dioxins may be a potential concern only if the most contaminated groundwater on site is disturbed or used in some way.

#### Child Health Considerations

ATSDR and MDH recognize that the unique vulnerabilities of infants and children make them of special concern to communities faced with contamination of their water, soil, air, or food. Children are at greater risk than adults from certain kinds of exposures to hazardous substances. They are more likely to be exposed because they play outdoors and they often bring food into contaminated areas. They are smaller than adults, which means they breathe dust, soil, and heavy vapors close to the ground. Children also weigh less, resulting in higher doses of chemical exposure per body weight. The developing body systems of children can sustain permanent damage if toxic exposures occur during critical growth stages. Most importantly, children depend completely on adults for risk identification and management decisions, housing decisions, and access to medical care.

At this time children are unlikely to be exposed to contaminants at or from the site. There is little to attract children to the site, and children should avoid the site in any event due to the frequent truck and rail traffic. Opportunities for exposure to contaminated groundwater are presently limited to several industrial facilities and a restaurant. Children could be exposed if they play in the artificial stream at Jax Café, but such exposure would be of short duration and unlikely to be of health concern.

### **III. Conclusions**

The Cedar Service site remains heavily contaminated with wood treatment products, primarily pentachlorophenol (PCP) and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). Dioxin contamination at the site has not been fully defined. Residual PCP and PAH (and possibly dioxin) contaminated soil remains at the site at depth, and the contaminants may be present in shallow soils or at the surface. Groundwater is heavily contaminated with PCP on and off the site. Exposure to contaminated soils is minimal. However, because little is known about current contaminant levels in surface soils, the site soils represent an indeterminate public health hazard. Some exposure to PCP from the use of contaminated groundwater in several commercial wells near the site is likely occurring, but is difficult to quantify and therefore represents an indeterminate public health hazard.

#### **IV. Recommendations**

1. People should follow posted signs and avoid trespassing on the Cedar Service site.
2. The planned site investigation activities, including additional on-site soil investigation and on and off-site groundwater monitoring should continue until the extent of the soil and groundwater contamination has been fully defined.
3. To determine the extent to which dioxins and furans contribute to the potential health risks at the site, and to assist in evaluating future remedial options, additional analyses for dioxins and furans should be conducted in selected on-site soil samples, and perhaps in groundwater samples from the most contaminated monitoring well(s) on-site should the groundwater be proposed to be used or pumped in any way.
4. Any resident of the communities near the Soo Line Shoreham Yard facility who has an operating private well should contact MDH, MDA, or MPCA staff so that a water sample from the well can be collected and analyzed for the presence of contaminants from the Soo Line Shoreham facility. In order to accomplish this, SAAC, MDA and/or CP Rail should consider contacting residents within one mile of the site to inquire if they have an operating private well.
5. MDA should ensure that any operating commercial or industrial wells located within one mile south of the site that have not been previously sampled be sampled for site contaminants.
6. MDH will consider suggesting institutional controls to ensure no new wells are put into the area of contaminated groundwater without MDH review and approval.

#### **V. Public Health Action Plan**

MDH's Public Health Action Plan for the Cedar Service site consists of continued consultation with MDA staff on environmental sampling and analysis, communication of the results to neighborhood residents near the site, and participation in any planned public outreach activities. MDH will also consider whether a Special Well Construction Area is needed to prevent future exposure to contaminants in groundwater from the site.

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**Preparer of Report:**

James Kelly, M.S.  
Health Assessor  
Site Assessment and Consultation Unit  
Minnesota Department of Health  
tel: (651) 215-0913  
[james.kelly@health.state.mn.us](mailto:james.kelly@health.state.mn.us)

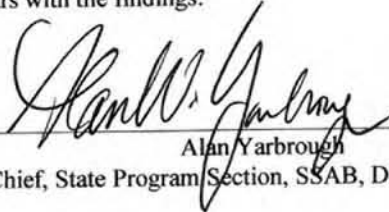
## CERTIFICATION

This Cedar Service Site Health Consultation was prepared by the Minnesota Department of Health under a cooperative agreement with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). It is in accordance with approved methodology and procedures existing at the time the health consultation was begun. Editorial review was completed by the Cooperative Agreement partner.



Jeff Kellam  
Technical Project Officer, SPS, SSAB, DHAC  
ATSDR

The Division of Health Assessment and Consultation, ATSDR, has reviewed this public health consultation and concurs with the findings.



Alan Yarbrough  
Chief, State Program Section, SSAB, DHAC, ATSDR